

NEWS RELEASE



Newport Chemical Depot

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Depot Confirms VX Stockpile Eliminated

NEWPORT CHEMICAL DEPOT, Ind. – On Aug. 8, personnel at the Newport Chemical Agent Disposal Facility (NECDF) confirmed the last ton container of VX had been successfully neutralized, marking the completion of stockpile elimination at the Newport Chemical Depot (NECD).

For nearly 40 years, workers at the Newport Chemical Depot (NECD) safely stored 1,269 tons of liquid chemical agent VX in 1,690 steel containers. Hydrolysate, the resulting byproduct of the neutralization process, is sent to Veolia Environmental Services in Port Arthur, Texas, for final disposal. The Army receives Chemical Weapons Convention treaty credit for chemical destruction when the hydrolysate is transferred from shipping containers at Veolia.

"This day marks a tremendous milestone for the workers at Newport, the citizens of Indiana and the rest of the world," said U.S. Army Chemical Materials Agency (CMA) Director Conrad Whyne. "Newport's stockpile has been safely eliminated, which brings the United States one step closer to fulfilling the commitment of destroying our nations' chemical weapons."

The agent was drained from a steel container using a chemical agent transfer system, or CHATS. NECDF used a neutralization process to destroy the VX. This process involved mixing the VX with heated sodium hydroxide and water in a reactor.

"Teamwork and dedication are at the core of each person on site," NECD Commander Lt. Col. William Hibner said. "I am proud and honored to be a part of a work force whose mission to eliminate the Newport stockpile was completed safely and successfully."

"We have always stressed our focus and commitment to safety," said Site Project Manager Jeff Brubaker. "Employees at Newport operated with care and concern for themselves, local communities and the environment, which has led us to our milestone today."

Neutralization operations at NECDF began May 5, 2005. It took three years and three months to drain and neutralize the VX agent. The site will now enter a closure phase to dismantle buildings and equipment, as well as dispose of various wastes related to the NECDF project. These operations are expected to take 18-24 months.

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Parsons Project Manager Doug Reehl said, "The safe destruction of the VX stockpile at Newport is the culmination of years of dedication and commitment on the part of our employees. We have truly made the world a safer and better place."

The public is welcome to attend a ceremony to commemorate the end of agent operations Oct. 25 at 10 a.m. Distinguished guests will speak in the auditorium of the South Vermillion High School, followed by a short reception in the school cafeteria.

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For additional information, please visit the following web site http://www.cma.army.mil/newportcompletion.aspx